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Message Text

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PAGE 01 DANANG 01218 210923Z

14
ACTION EA-07

INFO OCT-01 SCS-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SCA-01 H-01 /011 W
---------- 048835
O 210813Z NOV 73 ZFF4
FM AMCONSUL DANANG
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 193
INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC
SUBJECT: WHEREABOUTS OF U.S. CITIZEN RICHARD WARREN THOMPSON

REF: A. STATE 227849
B. DANANG 1216 (NOTAL)
C. DANANG 1217

1. CRASH SITE OF AIR VIETNAM FLIGHT VN 341 WAS LOCATED BY WOODCUTTERS IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE AT APPROXIMATELY 1900 HOURS NOVEMBER 20. SEVEN BODIES, NONE OF WHICH ARE AMERICAN, HAVE BEEN FOUND THUS FAR BY A PLATOON OF A LONG-RANGE RECONNAISSANCE TEAM IN THE AREA. THERE IS NO, REPEAT NO, REPORT OF AN AMERICAN BODY BEING DISCOVERED.

2. CONGEN PROVINCE OFFICE QUANG NGAI REPORTS THAT BGEN. TRAN VAN NHUT, COMMANDING GENERAL, 2ND ARVN DIVISION, HAS PERSONALLY MADE AN OVERFLIGHT AND SIGHTED THE CRASH SITE OF THE C-47 AIRCRAFT. THE LOCATION (BT 468006) IS IN THE VICINITY OF NUI RANG CUA MOUNTAIN ON THE BORDER OF QUANG NGAI AND QUANG TIN PROVINCES, ABOUT 30 KILOMETERS NORTH-NORTHWEST OF QUANG NGAI CITY. GEN. NHUT HAS REPORTED THAT ONLY THE TAIL SECTION OF THE AIRPLANE REMAINS. THE FUSELAGE WAS BURNED OUT. IN HIS JUDGMENT, IT IS HIGHLY UNPROBABLE THAT ANYONE WOULD HAVE SURVIVED THE CRASH. THE QUAKER COLLEAGUES OF RICHARD W. THOMPSON IN QUANG NGAI SAID THAT AMERICAN FRIENDS SERVICE COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES IN SAIGON BELIEVE THOMPSON DID BOARD THE PLANE BECAUSE HE HAS NOT TURNED UP IN SAIGON.
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3. IN ORDER TO PUT TROOPS IN TO SECURE THE CRASH SITE AREA FOR RESCUE AND RECOVERY OPERATION, GEN. NHUT IS AWAITING ADDITIONAL AIRCRAFT FROM DANANG. HE SAYS THAT AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL, SUCH OPERATIONS COULD BE COMPLETED IN ONE DAY.

4. THE CONGEN PROVINCE OFFICE USED AN AIR AMERICA HELICOPTER TO FLY OVER THE AREA DURING THE MORNING OF NOVEMBER 21, BUT CLOUD COVER PREVENTED SIGHTING THE WRECKAGE.
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